Why Coach*?

Truthfully, Coach* satisfies a number of goals. That makes it hard to be precise about what a Coach* is and makes it easier to reasonably disagree over why we do them. Among other things, we use Coach* as....

1. A first party content beat - these are great reactivations and excitement generators
2. An energizing force for our team - we love building games
3. A design lens for our creative tools - we know how to build good games so we use the Coach* model to inspire and focus our tool efforts around capabilities we need to build our own first-party experiences

All of these are true but they aren't all in harmony. When we have limited resources, we can't fully satisfy all of them. This leads to challenges. I think the way we use Coach*s will change over time so let me explain that a bit...

Coach* in the long term

The long term view is of Coach* is easy to understand and rally around -- **we use our tools to make first party games**. That's the ultimate Coach*... if we can build exciting, high-quality first-party content with our UGC tools, we're in an amazing place. Players are going to build incredible experiences.

But we aren't there yet. When we try to build Coach* “for real” right now, we get awesome learnings (eg ^CapturePoint experience) but we can't hit the quality bar we want for a first party RRO. Even so, this is the long term aspiration. We are going to get there!

Coach* in the short term

If we can't build Coach*s "for real" yet, that leaves us in an awkward spot. How *do* we build them? There are lots of different, completely reasonable ways we could handle this. Here are a few things we want to be true for each Coach* going forward:

- **Each Coach* we pick should align with a tools push**. We should think about the gameplay we want players to be able to create in UGC, then think of a game that helps us make the right design decisions around the tool capabilities. **Even if we don't use our tools to make the game, the game still helps us make better tools.** (Hopefully that makes sense). This is what we did for ^StuntRunner -- we didn't ship our content on top of our tools, but we did add ways to mark up your environment for climbing, added bounce pad and checkpoint UGC items, and added an animation gizmo capable of driving moving platforms (and more!)

- **Every Coach* we ship should take us closer to a "for real" Coach***. Appa had a great suggestion for this. We work on a feature in a given Coach*, then plan to use it “for real” in the following Coach*. This helps us avoid taking a ship dependency on a tool that isn’t finished. For example, we should use our new moods system for future base rooms so that players can customize them. This likely involves some hard steps *but they are worth the effort*. If we use our moods system, for example, every time we upgrade moods to support a new feature for an RRO room, our UGC tools are getting better too.

- **We should highly value work that takes us close to "for real" Coach*** -- If we take the point above seriously, this is a natural next step. Work that allows us to get closer to "for real" Coach*s is awesome! Any feature we ship "for real" has huge benefits to UGC creators. As an example, it would be incredible if we could prop our new map with UGC props. That takes some systemic work - that's worth prioritizing. If we could do that systems work now, we could choose to use it on our next Coach*